

WYCOMBE Wanderers are through to the second round of the F.A. Cup for the fourth year running. They got there on Saturday with two first half goals in five minutes followed by solid defensive display later in the game which now puts them into round two and a home draw with Reading.

This tie had plenty of potential pitfalls in store for the Blues but they produced a top class performance with the defence taking the honours on the day. The back four were under pressure for most of the second half as the 'Ville' fought desperately to stay in the cup but time and again they were held back. Outstanding once again were centre backs Alan Phillips and Keith Mead while full backs Paul Birdseye and Bob Davies

Waterlooville 1, Wycombe Wanderers 2 REPORT BY STUART EARP

coolly played themselves out of tight situations.

John Robson, Ville's 6 ft forward singled out as the danger man on Saturday, was hardly given a look in but showed his finishing power in the 68th minute when he was given a yard's space to drive home Waterlooville's only goal.

Praise should also be given to the two goalscorers who took their chances well. Two goals in five minutes is hard to stomach at the best of times, especially in such an important game, and they certainly took the wind from Waterlooville's sails in the first half.

During that time Wanderers won growing respect from the 3,600 crowd that packed into Jubilee Park. They simply looked far more professional than their Southern League Div One opponents in everything they did. In the first half they had all the time they needed to find each other accurately while the clever flicks of the forwards

always caused problems for the slow Ville back four.

Wanderers fielded their expected side with John Priestley fit to resume in midfield while Alan Davies was named as sub. In front of Waterlooville's largest crowd for a long time Howard Kennedy was first to test goalkeeper Richard Damerell with an awkward free kick to the near post.

The home side retaliated immediately and Kim Manns, their best player, swung a corner inches over the crossbar. It was just as Waterlooville were looking dangerous that Wanderers scored the first goal after 14 minutes. Tony Horseman shrugged off a fierce challenge from Alan Avery inside the penalty area and chipped the ball back across goal. Priestley was on the six yard line to hook home a volley past Damerell's fingertips.

Ville were taken aback by this sudden reverse but there was more in store five minutes later when Horseman flicked on a

cross from the left and Dylan Evans sent a header against the crossbar. With Damerell on the ground having failed to tip the ball over, Howard Kennedy jumped high to head the rebound into the net.

This second goal caused a nasty accident behind the goal when the barrier broke as Wycombe's fans surged forward. The spectators spilled onto the pitch and one Wycombe fan broke a leg which was trapped in the crush. It took three or four minutes to repair the damage and take the unfortunate supporter to hospital.

Mick Bennett was over with a header while Mick Holfield suffered the same fate with a fierce drive in the 22nd minute. Waterlooville pressed strongly for goals but received little change from Mead and Phillips who gobbled up everything in the air. Phillips showed his experience on the ground as well when he robbed Bennett in the nick of time inside the Blues penalty area.

Mick Seymour sent John Maskell full length with a well struck drive from 20 yards but play soon switched to the other end where Ian Pearson was just wide from eight yards.

In between these goalmouth incidents Wycombe were gradually establishing a firm grip of midfield where they played the ball around cleverly to deny the home side possession. Intelligent use of the offside trap often caught the Ville forwards but it came to grief in the 43rd minute when Manns broke through with Bennett unmarked to his right. Manns spotted the centre forward but Davies raced back and intercepted the ball at the expense of a corner. A goal then would have brought Waterlooville right back into the game but as it was they went in at half time with a two goal deficit to cut back in the second half.

Waterlooville, who had tended to bunch in the first half, altered their tactics after the break and attempted to get round the full backs. They found Birdseye and Davies difficult to beat, however, and lacked penetration on the flanks. Nevertheless, they had much the better of the second half as Wycombe lost their earlier accuracy and gave the ball away too often.

Maskell held Bennett's 53rd minute drive but the other keeper, Damerell, was in all sorts of trouble a minute later at the other end. Horseman was put clear of the defence and Damerell came out of his area to meet him. Bodger shielded the ball and forced the 'keeper to handle outside the box but Damerell saved Kennedy's resulting free kick.

Despite their two goal advantage Wanderers still brought up their big men for set pieces and it almost cost them dearly when a free kick was quickly thumped downfield in the 65th minute. It left Ville with a two against one situation but the vital pass went astray.

Then in the 68th minute the home side pulled a goal back. Bennett got to the bye-line and crossed low and hard through the defence. Robson was left unattended for a second and made the most of his chance by planting the ball firmly into the net.

This re-kindled the home side's hopes of staying in the cup and they pressed strongly for an equaliser. It was at this stage that Wanderers were so well served by their defence, which withstood everything Ville could throw at them. Midfield also lent a hand while the front three, especially Pearson, brought welcome relief by holding the ball up front.

Alan Davies replaced a tired Horseman after 75 minutes and soon afterwards Alan Stones was booked by Mr Gunn, a fine official, for dissent. Still Waterlooville came forward but again their attacks were held firmly in check by Wycombe's superb defence, who ensured that Maskell was never seriously troubled again.

Kennedy and Avery fired over the top in the closing seconds while the referee added on four minutes of injury time. At the final whistle there was no disputing which side deserved to go through into the second round.

WATERLOOVILLE: R. Damerell; R. Gill, J. Kill, A. Avery, A. Stones; K. Finley, T. Williams, M. Seymour; J. Robson, M. Bennett, K. Manns. Sub R. Sykes (not used).

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; P. Birdseye, K. Mead, A. Phillips, R. Davies; H. Kennedy, J. Priestley, M. Holfield; A. Horseman. (sub A. Davies 75 mins), D. Evans, I. Pearson.

Referee: A. Gunn (Southwick, Sussex).

Half-time: 2-0. Goalscorers, Wycombe — Priestley (14), Kennedy (19); Waterlooville: Robson (68). Attendance: 3,600.